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Want a Diagram Of CIA Layout? Try Your GSA

The three most sensitive locations in the federal government are the White House, CIA headquarters and the Pentagon's telecommunications center. They're at the top of any list of terrorist targets, and are consequently protected by the tightest security measures.

Unfortunately, there's a fourth, unlikely target that is not properly guarded: the General Services Administration's National Capital Region headquarters in downtown Washington. That's right, the outfit that provides paper clips, typewriter ribbons and window washers for federal office buildings.

In a way, the GSA building is even more sensitive than the Big Three, because it's the repository of maps, drawings and diagrams of the government's most secret areas. Yet my associate Dale Van Atta, with no security clearance whatever, was able to stroll in off the street and look at many of these documents and obtain copies of some.

I've already reported how he got to see a 19-page set of detailed engineer's drawings showing every vital electrical conduit in the White

House. It's frightening to imagine what these pinpoint diagrams could be used for if they fell into the hands of a terrorist or a KGB agent, or some random nut with a grievance against the president.

Though some of the documents my associate found lying around were stamped "Confidential," others had no security classification. Yet they provide information that would make a saboteur's mouth water.

There was, for example, an unclassified, desk-sized "Composite Utilities Plan" for "CIA, Headquarters Utility Plan, Route 123, McLean, Va. 22101." Few outsiders are ever allowed into the wooded grounds of the CIA in suburban Virginia. Yet here, for any snoop to see, was every building, road and power fixture clearly drawn, including the specifications of all the major utility lines.

The CIA wants to build a new computer center at its Langley-McLean headquarters. The set of schematic drawings was unclassified, and a notation indicated that it was only one of more than a dozen copies. Where are the rest? Who has seen them?

Also easily available were detailed drawings of the Naval Telecommunications Center near the Pentagon. It handles global communications for the entire Defense Department, and

was temporarily shut down recently because of maintenance problems.

Security is difficult enough even if GSA were on its toes. Like most housekeepers, the GSA hires private contractors to do its wiring, plumbing and construction work. If the project is classified, the contractor and its employees are given thorough security investigations before they're given clearance.

A single sensitive White House project illustrates the extent of the necessary clearance. "A total of 39 companies and organizations with 360 personnel are now on the work order," an internal GSA memo says.

Of those 360 employees, 310 had been cleared and 50 were still being investigated. In addition, 10 employees had been put in "Do Not Admit" status.

"There have been several occasions requiring access to work for personnel in the 'pending' category," the memo notes, adding, "Cooperation and coordination with Secret Service has been excellent."

New drawings for the hush-hush project were ordered done by the National Park Service "and turned over to U.S.S.S. [Secret Service] for secure filing." But sooner or later the plans will have to be seen by dozens of workers, and copies will probably wind up with the butterfingers at the GSA.